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their fingers in counting from one decimal to another.² One of my Creek informants in using his fingers to aid his memory began with the little finger of his left hand, which he doubled over, and followed with his other fingers in order. Then he passed to his right hand where he again began with the little finger and proceeded as before.

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Measures of length were based on various parts of the body, as was originally the case with us, the fingers, hands, arms, etc., being used.

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Distances between places far apart were measured by the time consumed in getting from one to the other—i. e., by the number of camps or "sleeps" or by the number of moons. Regarding their sense of the passage of time generally Swan has the following very pertinent remarks:

"They count the number of days or years, either past or to come, by tens. Having no exact method of keeping or reckoning their time they seldom tell nearer than within one month of the time any remarkable occurrence took place in the preceding year; but circumstances, or any speeches that might have attended such occurrence, they remember accurately. There is not one in the whole nation knows how old he is."³

The natural measures of time marked off by the altered positions of the sun and moon—i. e., days, months, and years, and their subdivisions—have already been discussed. When they wished to keep in mind a certain number of these or to remember certain ones among them they employed several devices.

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The commonest method of determining a fixed date in the future upon which some event was to take place was by wrapping up a number of short sticks into a little bundle and throwing one away each day. When but one remained the person who had the bundle knew that the appointed day had arrived. This was the method employed every year to enable all of the families of each town to assemble on the busk ground at the proper date. As many bundles were distributed as there were families and the head of each family threw away the sticks. It is to be noted that a stick was thrown away immediately on receipt of the bundle—i. e., the count began with the day on which the bundle was received; in fact the messenger who brought the bundle usually threw away the first stick himself. This is said by French writers to have been the method by which the date of the Natchez massacre was fixed, and the tribes confederate to the conspiracy were able to tell when to rise. Such sticks were called "the broken days," and according to Adair the same name was applied to certain square notched sticks which were used for a similar purpose. In the latter case the sticks were sent about with a definite

² Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. 1, p. 273.

³ Swan in Schoolcraft, Ind. Tribes, vol. 7, p. 277.